342
787
777

on it; two days later the owner returns. If he is able to separate the vine, without a break, in two parts the site is a favorable one.[20]

Another method of selecting a house site is to mark a square on the ground on the proposed site. A cross and as many stones as there are members in the family are put inside this square. If some of the stones are missing the next morning this is an unfavorable omen. One family in Talo-ot repeated this method three times until finally the same number of stones were at the base of the cross as were put there the evening before. The spirits appear to be amenable to persistence and doggedness on the part of humans.

CONSTRUCTION OF THE DWELLING

332
412

The first step in the actual construction of a new dwelling is to dig the post holes. A blunt iron-pointed digging stick (gabok) is used to loosen the dirt that is scooped out of the hole with one's hands or a coconut shell. When the hole becomes so deep that it is difficult to reach the bottom the songsong is employed. The songsong is a sturdy bamboo whose end is split in many places; when pounded into the loose dirt these ends flare outward and the earth is packed inside. The songsong is then withdrawn from the hole and the dirt shaken out.

---

[20] Oracion, op. cit., pp. 21-2. The same method of locating the four post holes, as described by the balisa, is also used by the Magahats; however, it does not appear to have any supernatural purpose.